

IN THE CLAIMS:

Pending claims follow.

1. (Previously Amended) A method of maintaining a data communications protocol session, the method comprising the steps of:

- sending a request from a client to a server over a data communications network;
- receiving said request in said server;
- sending a response to said request from said server to said client over said data communications network;
- receiving said response in an agent;
- determining if illusory content needs to be sent prior to sending said response;
- performing processing in said agent as a result of said response;
- if illusory content needs to be sent during said processing, sending one or more messages containing illusory content from said agent to said client;
- sending said response from said agent to said client; and
- receiving said response in said client;
- wherein said one or more messages containing said illusory content is sent for preventing a time out operation as a result of security processing.

2. (Previously Amended) A method for an agent to maintain a data communications protocol session, the method comprising:

- receiving a response in an agent from a server in a communications network, in response to a request from a client;
- determining if illusory content needs to be sent prior to sending said response;
- performing processing in said agent as a result of said response;
- if illusory content needs to be sent during said processing, sending one or more messages containing illusory content from said agent to said

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client; and

sending said response from said agent to said client;

wherein said one or more messages containing said illusory content is sent for preventing a time out operation as a result of security processing.

3. (Original) A method as in claim 2, wherein said step of receiving a response further comprises receiving a file.

4. (Original) A method as in claim 3, wherein said file further comprises a computer program.

5. (Original) A method as in claim 3, wherein said file further comprises a document.

6. (Original) A method as in claim 2, wherein said step of performing processing further comprises searching a file.

7. (Original) A method as in claim 6, wherein said step of searching a file further comprises scanning said file for one or more computer viruses.

8. (Original) A method as in claim 6, wherein said step of searching a file further comprises scanning said file for one or more text phrases.

9. (Original) A method as in claim 2, wherein said step of performing processing further comprises encrypting a file.

10. (Original) A method as in claim 2, wherein said step of performing processing further comprises decrypting a file.

11. (Original) A method as in claim 2, wherein said step of performing processing further comprises creating a public key digital signature.

12. (Original) A method as in claim 2, wherein said step of performing

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processing further comprises verifying a public key digital signature.

13. (Original) A method as in claim 2, wherein said data communications protocol session further comprises an HTML session.

14. (Currently Amended) A method as in claim 13, wherein said step of sending one or more messages containing illusory content further comprises the steps of:

creating a copy of said response;

modifying said copy of said response by inserting an entity-header; and

transmitting said modified response to said client.

15. (Previously Amended) A computer readable medium containing computer program instructions for maintaining a data communications protocol session, said computer program instructions containing instructions for:

receiving a response from a server in a communications network, in response to a request from a client;

determining if illusory content needs to be sent prior to sending said response;

performing processing as a result of said response;

if illusory content needs to be sent during said processing, sending one or more messages containing said illusory content appropriate for said data communications protocol to said client; and

sending said response to said client;

wherein said one or more messages containing said illusory content is sent for preventing a time out operation as a result of security processing.

16. (Previously Amended) A system for maintaining a data communications protocol session, comprising:

a first computer operably coupled to one or more additional computers over said communications network, said first computer including

software executable on said first computer and configured to:

- receive a response from a server in a communications network, in response to a request from a client;
- determine if illusory content needs to be sent prior to sending said response;
- perform processing as a result of said response;
- send one or more messages containing said illusory content appropriate for said data communications protocol to said client, if illusory content needs to be sent during said processing; and
- send said response to said client;

wherein said one or more messages containing said illusory content is sent for preventing a time out operation as a result of security processing.